BUMED Oral History Project
CAPT Eric R. Hoffman, MSC, USN
Officer in Charge,
Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE)

Date and Location of Interview: April 23, 2014, Telephonic
Interviewer: Mr. André Sobocinski, BUMED Historian

CAPT Eric R. Hoffman was born in Schenectady, New York. Prior to joining the Navy, he earned a Bachelor's of Science (Biology) degree from Creighton University, Masters of Science (Biological Sciences) degree from Northern Illinois University and Doctor of Philosophy (Entomology) degree from The Ohio State University. Following graduation, he received his commission and reported to Officer Indoctrination School (OIS).

Following OIS, CAPT Hoffman reported to the Navy Disease Vector Ecology and Control Center, Jacksonville, Florida (DVECC JAX). During his tour, CAPT Hoffman deployed as a member of a humanitarian assistance team supporting the U.S. Military Support Group –Haiti, providing vector-control training to Haitian healthcare workers, reducing the impact of disease. Additionally, he deployed to GITMO as an agricultural quarantine inspector in support of Operation Fairwinds, coordinated a U.S. SOUTHCOM sponsored medical officer exchange project involving the Argentine Navy, and led a preventive medicine team providing arthropod-borne disease control assistance to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico following Hurricane Georges.

Following his tour at DVECC JAX, CDR Hoffman reported to the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia (DSCP) Pacific Region/West Coast Support Office, Alameda, California as Staff Entomologist. During his tour, CDR Hoffman developed the first DSCP Operational Rations pest management website and created a variety of informational publications distributed to over 150 government and commercial activities worldwide. Additionally, he acted as a consultant to the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps and USDA to establish a comprehensive pre-export inspection program for produce airlifted to Guam, Korea and Japan, significantly reducing product destruction.

After leaving DSCP, CAPT Hoffman returned to DVECC JAX where he was directly responsible for the deployment readiness and training of entomologists and preventive medicine technicians deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom; Iraqi Freedom 1, 2-1, 2-2 and 3-1; Secure Tomorrow, Haiti; Unified Assistance, Thailand/Indonesia and hurricane relief, Florida. Additionally, CAPT Hoffman deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

as the entomologist for Preventive Medicine Mobile Augmentation Readiness (PM MART) Team Two in support of the 1st Force Service Support Group (FSSG), 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF). As the sole Navy vector control team in Iraq during the first 28 days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, his team contributed to significantly reducing the disease non-battle injury rate (DNBI) within the I MEF Area of Operations (AOR).

Following his second tour at DVECC, CAPT Hoffman reported to the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) serving as Deputy Director, Expeditionary Preventive Medicine and Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit (FDPMU) Doctrine and Training Officer. During his tour, CAPT Hoffman led development and implementation of a comprehensive FDPMU standardized training program and streamlined logistic support for deployed teams. Additionally, he significantly advanced the command's efforts in expeditionary preventive medicine, shaping doctrine, culminating in a Joint Capabilities Document, FDPMU ROC & POE and FDPMU NTSP.

Following his tour at NMCPHC, CAPT Hoffman reported to the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville, Florida as Commanding Officer. One of 6 Department of Defense (DoD) Drug Screening Laboratories (NDSL) and the only Navy lab to process over 1 million specimens annually, NDSL JAX is responsible for providing forensic chemical analysis of urine specimens for controlled substances and illegal drugs.

Since February 2011, CAPT Hoffman has served as Officer in Charge, Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE). NECE is the only Department of Defense activity dedicated to operational entomology and Center of Excellence for the development of novel technologies to better protect deployed war-fighters from blood feeding insects that transmit diseases.

CAPT Hoffman has served as a the Preventive Medicine lead on JFCOM's Joint Health Surveillance, Intelligence and Preventive Medicine Integrated Process Team (IPT), chaired several Armed Forces Pest Management Board Committees, and currently serves as Vice Chair and is the Navy Entomology Community Specialty Leader.

CAPT Hoffman's personal awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (2), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (2), Joint Service Achievement Medal, and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (2).

Key Acronyms

DEET—N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide

DVECC-Disease Vector Ecology and Control Center
DSCP-Defense Supply Center, Philadephia, PA
EHO—Environmental Health Officer
FDPMU-Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit
FH-3—Fleet Hospital Three (Jalibah)
FSSG- First Force Service Support Group
GE—General Electric
Global Health Engagement Initiative (GHI)
NDL JAX—Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville, FL
NMCPHC-Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center
NECE-Navy Entomology Center for Excellence
PMT—Preventive Medicine Technicians
WHO—World Health Organization

Glossary

Cope, CAPT (ret.) Stan MSC, USN – a Navy entomologist who recruiting CAPT Hoffman in 1995. Cope served 23 years in the Navy. At the time of this interview CAPT Cope was serving as the manager of technical services at Terminex.

Creighton University – a private, coeducational, Jesuit university located in Omaha, Nebraska. It was founded by the Society of Jesus in 1878.

DEET—DEET (or N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) is the active ingredient in many insect repellent products.

Filth Flies—so named because of their habits of breeding in "filthy" matter such as droppings, manure, garbage, cadavers, etc. Filth flies can contaminate food and are capable of carrying and spreading a variety of health related pathogens to humans from filthy sources. Due to filth flies high reproductive rate and short lifespan, filth flies can easily develop resistance to some commonly used pesticides. (source: http://www.adamspestcontrol.com/)

Fisher, Susan, PhD – Faculty Emeritus, Department of Entomology, College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University. Fisher's area of expertise was environmental toxicology.

Fleet Hospital 3— Located at the former Iraqi Air Force Base Jalibah that was captured by coalition force at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003), Fleet Hospital Three (FH-3) was a 9-acre, 116-bed facility operated by more than 300 medical service support and Construction Battalion personnel from around the nation.

General Electric (GE)— Multinational Corporation cofounded in 1892 by Thomas Edison. It is based in Fairfield, CT.

Hurricane Georges, September 1998— a category-4 hurricane which

caused severe destruction in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico and killing 604 people.

Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease that is found in parts of the tropics, subtropics, and southern Europe caused by an infection with *Leishmania* parasites, which are spread by the bite of phlebotomine sandflies. The most common forms are leishmaniasis, are cutaneous which causes skin sores, and visceral which affects several internal organs (source: www.cdc.gov).

Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville, FL (NDL JAX)— One of six Department of Defense (DoD) Drug Screening Laboratories (NDSL), and the only Navy lab to process over one million specimens annually, NDSL JAX is responsible for providing forensic chemical analysis of urine specimens for controlled substances and illegal drugs.

Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE)— Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE). NECE is the only Department of Defense activity dedicated to operational entomology and Center of Excellence for the development of novel technologies to better protect deployed war-fighters from blood feeding insects that transmit diseases.

Punch cards—a piece of stiff paper that contained either commands for controlling automated machinery or data for data processing applications. Commonly used by computers into the 1980s. The hole sin the punch cards were used to represent commands or data applications.

Pyrethroid insecticides are a special chemical class of active ingredients found in many of the modern insecticides found on store shelves and used by pest management professionals. The name "pyrethroid" means "pyrethrum-like" and refers to the origin of this class of pesticides—made from dried flower heads of *Chrysanthemum*. (source: http://citybugs.tamu.edu/)

Stover, William, CAPT, MSC, USN - Commanding Officer of the Navy Environmental Health Center (later the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center) from 2006 to 2009.

Tabletop Exercises— Training designed to test an individual or group's theoretical ability to respond to a situation.

Terminet—Terminet product line of computers was introduced by General Electric in the late 1960s. The computer featured applications for "solving scientific and business problems," "point to point business exchange," and the ability to edit and format text. The whole console could weigh up to 200 pounds. (source: www.generalelectric.com)

U.S. Global Health Initiative (GHI)— started by President Obama in 2009 as a means of establishing health services and capacity in developing countries. The GHI is an

“integrated, coordinated and results-driven approach to global health; it brings together disease-specific programs to ensure more unified global health investments.” (source: www.state.gov)